



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR GINA M. RAIMONDO

To Rhode Island's Valuable Grocery Store Employees:

Over the past few weeks, you may have heard me say that there is no handbook to this crisis, and it's true. There's nothing to guide us through these unprecedented and unwelcome times. There are no easy decisions to be made, and there are no perfect solutions as we fight the coronavirus.

As this crisis unfolds, I have had to ask Rhode Islanders to make huge sacrifices and implement immense changes to how we live and how we work. To combat COVID-19, we have had to physically distance ourselves from our extended families, our friends, our places of worship, and our beautiful state beaches and parks – and it's been challenging for every one of us.

On March 28th, I asked all non-critical retail businesses to close their doors to the public. This decision was not made lightly – it was made knowing how very difficult the upcoming weeks would be on the individuals, and families, those businesses support.

Throughout this crisis, Rhode Islanders need to have access to essential goods, which makes grocery stores and supermarkets – including yours – vital. As a result, while I have asked other retail businesses to shut their doors, I have asked grocery stores and supermarkets to remain open and continue providing citizens with the crucial supplies they need.

I know it has not been easy to remain open, keep items in stock, and serve all of your customers. To each and every person who has been contributing to this immense effort, I want to say thank you. You and your colleagues have gone above and beyond to help Rhode Islanders during this difficult time. Whether you are working the front lines in stores, delivering groceries, ensuring supply chains remain active, or serving in any of the support roles that make industry operations come together – thank you for what you're doing.

It's important to me that you be able to remain as safe and as healthy as possible while continuing this vital work. That's why I have limited the number of customers allowed in your stores at any one time to further reduce crowds. I will continue working with industry leaders and our federal delegation on all issues that are important to you, including making benefits available to all those impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

I know that under the current circumstances, going to work every day can be hugely challenging. However, if you are healthy and well, I ask that you please continue working. Your role is vital, and I consider you a partner in our work to get Rhode Island through this crisis.

In addition to expressing my personal gratitude, I know I speak for each and every Rhode Islander when I say that your service is appreciated. Thank you for all you do.

Sincerely,

Gina M. Raimondo
Governor